

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, D.C. 20515

September 29, 2000

The Honorable Lawrence S. Eagleburger
Chairman
International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims
1300 L Street Northwest, Suite 1150
Washington, D.C. 20005-4107

Dear Chairman Eagleburger,

We are writing to express our concern about the alarming rate of rejection of claims processed through the International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims (ICHEIC), which has prevented many of our constituents from reclaiming their Holocaust era policies.

As reported in a *Los Angeles Times* story by Henry Weinstein on May 9, 2000, companies participating in ICHEIC have rejected three out of four claims that were fast-tracked and considered well documented. Hundreds of other policies have been idled for months and no appeals process exists. Many of the excuses by these companies for rejecting claims are ludicrous. Cases have been rejected even where gestapo orders document the confiscation of assets. Others are considered 'probably paid' where records show the transfer of payment was blocked, or 'fully paid' if a fraction of the policy was paid out after the war.

This is not the kind of justice and transparency heralded with ICHEIC's creation. The companies have dragged their feet in opening their files, and practically no new names have been published in months. We were shocked, therefore, to learn that the recent slave labor settlement reached between the U.S. and German governments would also resolve German insurance claims brought before ICHEIC. The major German insurance companies have yet to approve or pay out any claims arising from the German market, and placing a cap on their liability will only decrease the leverage of the U.S. government to pressure them to cooperate.

There is no doubt that all parties to the Holocaust era insurance lawsuits want the claims settled, but these companies should not be immunized without full accountability for repaying what they owe. We reject the notion that insurance claims estimated to be worth billions could be satisfied by the arbitrary DM 300 million set aside in the German Foundation Fund. We also strongly object to the idea that the U.S. government will be working for the dismissal of class action law suits considering that the courts have provided the only recourse for survivors and their heirs.

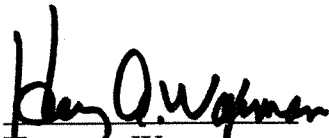
While we understand that ICHEIC has been working to develop an appeals process, the issues grows more critical as the number of rejections increase and the 2002 deadline for filing claims rapidly approaches. We appeal to you to create an independent appeals process that has

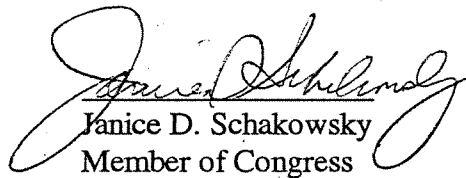
the resources to fully investigate cases, the flexibility to interpret the application of ICHEIC criteria, and the jurisdiction to pay out the claims that it approves. We further request that the 2002 filing deadline be extended so that all appeals will have time to be processed. In addition, we would like to know how ICHEIC plans to use the additional DM 325 million set aside for humanitarian purposes, and how these funds will be used to compensate claimants that had policies with companies that no longer exist.


ICHEIC never belonged in the slave labor settlement and allowing the German Foundation Fund to move forward on insurance before these issues are addressed would be even more unjust. We are especially concerned that the major problems with insurance will hold up the dispensation of slave labor payments. We therefore request that ICHEIC be de-linked from the settlement until the system flaws are addressed and urge the U.S. government not to file statements of interest to dismiss any class action insurance cases until these issues are resolved.

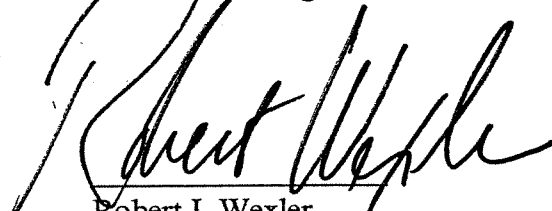
Thank you for your consideration of our interest in this matter. We look forward to hearing from you.

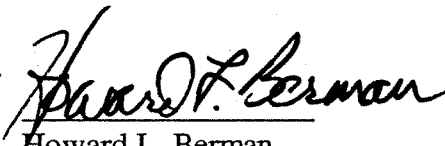
Sincerely,



Henry A. Waxman
Member of Congress

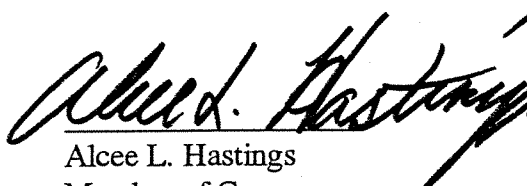

Janice D. Schakowsky
Member of Congress

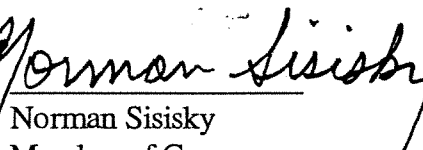

Tom Lantos
Member of Congress

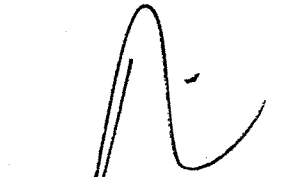

Robert I. Wexler
Member of Congress

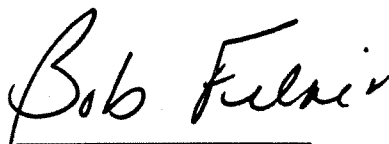

Howard L. Berman
Member of Congress

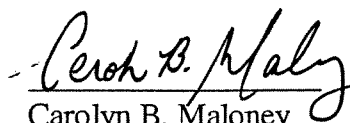

Sam Gejdenson
Member of Congress

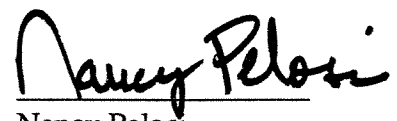

Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress


Norman Sisisky
Member of Congress


Anthony D. Weiner
Member of Congress


Bob Filner
Member of Congress


Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress


Nancy Pelosi
Member of Congress

Members of Congress signed on:

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|-----|-----------------------|-----|------------------|
| 1. | Henry A. Waxman | 45. | Sam Farr |
| 2. | Janice D. Schakowsky | 46. | James H. Maloney |
| 3. | Tom Lantos | | |
| 4. | Robert I. Wexler | | |
| 5. | Howard L. Berman | | |
| 6. | Sam Gejdenson | | |
| 7. | Alcee L. Hastings | | |
| 8. | Norman Sisisky | | |
| 9. | Anthony D. Weiner | | |
| 10. | Bob Filner | | |
| 11. | Carolyn B. Maloney | | |
| 12. | Nancy Pelosi | | |
| 13. | Bernard Sanders | | |
| 14. | Joseph Crowley | | |
| 15. | Jerrold Nadler | | |
| 16. | Joseph M. Hoeffel | | |
| 17. | Frank Pallone, Jr. | | |
| 18. | Jim McDermott | | |
| 19. | Steven R. Rothman | | |
| 20. | Michael. R. McNulty | | |
| 21. | Rick Lazio | | |
| 22. | Marcy Kaptur | | |
| 23. | Shelley Berkley | | |
| 24. | Jim Saxton | | |
| 25. | James P. McGovern | | |
| 26. | Charles B. Rangel | | |
| 27. | Grace F. Napolitano | | |
| 28. | Martin Frost | | |
| 29. | Mark Foley | | |
| 30. | Sherrod Brown | | |
| 31. | Eliot L. Engel | | |
| 32. | Benjamin A. Gilman | | |
| 33. | Nita M. Lowey | | |
| 34. | Stephanie Tubbs Jones | | |
| 35. | Steven C. LaTourette | | |
| 36. | William D. Delahunt | | |
| 37. | Brad Sherman | | |
| 38. | Peter Deutsch | | |
| 39. | Norman D. Dicks | | |
| 40. | Robert A. Brady | | |
| 41. | Tammy Baldwin | | |
| 42. | Neil Abercrombie | | |
| 43. | Lois Capps | | |
| 44. | Benjamin L. Cardin | | |